

Claim Listing

Please amend the claims as set forth in the following claim listing, which replaces all the pending claims.

1. (previously presented) A formulation comprising probiotic bacteria with monovalent alginate salts, wherein the formulation has a water activity of between 0.01-0.07, and wherein, upon exposure to an acidic environment, an alginic acid gel is formed which shields the probiotic bacteria from the antibiotic effects of the acidic environment.
2. (currently amended) The formulation of claim 1 which does not include ~~of~~ alginate salts of divalent metals, in quantities such that the shielding alginic acid gel does not form.
3. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 1 wherein the water activity is 0.028 or less.
4. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 1 wherein the monovalent alginate salts are sodium alginate or potassium alginate.
5. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 1 wherein the probiotic bacteria is from the *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium* genera..
6. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 1 wherein the formulation reacts with acidic environment to generate alginic acid.
7. (canceled)
8. (Currently Amended) The formulation of claim 1 which is encapsulated and wherein the capsule materials are made of gelatin, cellulose or the capsules are Vcaps™ a derivative of cellulose.

9. (Currently Amended) The formulation of claim 8 wherein the capsule materials are made of gelatin, cellulose or a derivative of cellulose and wherein the capsule materials do not include any alginates salts in them.
10. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 1 wherein the alginate salt is dried to a moisture content below 5% prior to mixing with probiotic bacteria.
11. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 8 wherein the probiotic bacteria are present at a concentration of 10^7 to 10^{11} cfu per capsule.
12. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 3 wherein the weight ratio of sodium alginate in the formulation is 10-99%.
13. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 11 wherein the weight ratio of sodium alginate in the formulation is 20% to 60%.
14. (canceled)
15. (canceled)
16. (canceled)
17. (canceled)
18. (canceled)
19. (canceled)
20. (canceled)
21. (canceled)
22. (canceled)
23. (canceled)
24. (canceled)
25. (canceled)
26. (canceled)
27. (canceled)
28. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 1 including grapeskin extract.
29. (previously presented) The formulation of claim 2 wherein the alginate salts of divalent metals are magnesium alginate or calcium alginate.